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ABSTRACT

The economic trend of deindustrialization and its effects on public school funding are examined in this paper. The first part describes deindustrialization and its causes, such as changing technology and tax laws, a shift toward more centralized and increasingly powerful corporations, the search for favorable business climates, and increased foreign competition. The next part describes Warren, Ohio, as an example of a community that was affected by deindustrialization. Serious economic problems, facilitated by widespread plant closures, negatively impacted the school district's ability to fund education. Ramifications of deindustrialization included less revenue from property tax levies, decreased community and student populations, and high unemployment, which contributed to a lack of community support for public schools. A conclusion is that the issues of school funding and deindustrialization remain closely tied to the growth and decline of American manufacturing. (86 footnotes; 58 references) (LMI)

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DEINDUSTRIALIZATION
AND THE FINANCIAL SUPPORT
OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

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Paper Presented at the Annual Meeting of
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ABSTRACT

Deindustrialization was the loss of industry and was observed as a reduction of some production methods, the elimination of selected aspects of the business, the movement of operations within the United States and to foreign countries, and the total shut down of the company. The impact it had on American business and our country included the loss of millions of factory jobs, the disruption of communities, the loss of worker security, diminished production in primary industries such as steel, automobiles, and textiles, and the loss of business capital and resources.

Following the Second World War, the United States was considered the world banker and the country was strengthened when the dollar became the world's principle currency. That led to increased investment by American firms in foreign companies. At the same time, changing technologies, a shift toward more centralized and increasingly powerful corporations, changing tax laws, the search for favorable business climates, and increased foreign competition had negative effects on older manufacturing operations in the United States.

A clear example of a deindustrialized economy was Warren, Ohio. This area was once a great industrial manufacturing center recognized for production of machine parts, electric lamps, steel, and automobiles. However, widespread plant shutdowns caused serious economic problems for the area and had a negative effect on the school district and its ability to fund education. For one thing, deindustrialization devalued both residential and industrial property which, in turn, reduced local financial support to the schools. This occurred because the primary funding tool was tax levies against property values. Secondly, deindustrialization reduced both the general population and the student population. This resulted in lowered state revenues for the schools and hampered accurate budget projections. And finally, deindustrialization caused high unemployment. This slowed consumer spending, caused a sense of community fear, and lowered community support of the schools.

The issues of school funding and deindustrialization remain closely tied to the growth and decline of American manufacturing. There is also the broader issue of funding education for all students in a country which places historical emphasis on an educated society. The need to provide adequate and equitable revenues to operate schools remains a critical topic facing this country.

DEINDUSTRIALIZATION AND THE FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

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After the Second World War, the United States experienced vigorous economic growth. Much of this growth was due to expanding heavy manufacturing in the automobile and steel industry. As the country moved toward the end of the 1960's, there were early warnings that economic changes might soon effect these industrial giants. Then in the late 1970's and early 1980's, the country experienced recessions, rising unemployment and high inflation. Heavy industry was seriously impacted by changing production methods, automation, and foreign competition. As a result, a deindustrialization process of reducing, restructuring, or eliminating production began in some industries. Nowhere were these changes felt more than in the Northeast sections of the United States. What was once the industrial heartland of America would come to be called the rustbelt.

Many towns and cities relied on large manufacturing plants to provide revenue in the form of property taxes to fund local schools. These industries were usually large employers and provided high paying jobs for many people. Employees working at these plants bought the usual necessities of family life including homes which in turn yielded additional property taxes for the schools. As heavy industry reduced or

eliminated production, however, these sources of revenue were also reduced or eliminated. School districts experiencing these lost revenue sources faced serious problems of how to finance education in an environment of underemployed or unemployed workers, lost taxes from abandoned factories, and decreasing property values.

What is Deindustrialization

In simple terms, deindustrialization is the loss of industry.¹ It comes in many forms including the reduction of some production methods, the elimination of selected aspects of the business, the movement of operations to different parts of the U.S. and foreign countries, or the total shut down of the company. While the definition of deindustrialization is easy to understand, so is the impact it has had on the workers and communities involved in such a process. While it is difficult to determine the exact count, it is estimated that during the 1970's and early 1980's, some several million U.S. jobs were eliminated because of production shifts and plant closings.² Communities were disrupted, worker security was put in jeopardy, and plant production diminished in this country. The manufacturing base, namely the auto industry, steel, electronics, textiles, and rubber saw steady decline in the United States.

¹Donald R. Castle, "The Response of the Mansfield City Schools to Local Deindustrialization" (Ph.D. diss., University of Akron, 1989), 25.

²Barry Bluestone and Bennett Harrison, The Deindustrialization of America (New York, Basic Books, Inc., 1982), 3-5.

Over the past years, the news media has been filled with stories of plant closings, job losses, shifting production, and relocation of plants.³ Many of our country's strongest industries experienced serious economic changes. For example, U.S. Steel announced that it was closing 15 production plants in 1979 and eliminating 13,000 jobs in the largest entrenchment in the company's history.⁴ After 77 years of production, Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company ended tire production in Akron, Ohio, resulting in the loss of 730 direct production jobs and thousands in support industries.⁵ Stating that the fastest way to reduce costs is to reduce employees, the leadership of Southern Airways cut 14 percent of its workforce in an effort to save the rest of the company.⁶ In 1979, 100 textile and garment manufacturing plants were closed in North Carolina, which resulted in the loss of jobs for over 25,000 workers.⁷ And finally, Lykes Corporation, the eighth largest U.S. steel producer, halted many years of production at Youngstown Sheet and Tube and put 4,100 workers out of a job.⁸

³Barbara Rudolph, "Singing the Shutdown Blues", Time Magazine, June 23, 1986, vol.127, #25.

⁴Agis Salpukas "U.S. Steel Is Closing 15 Plants: Old Units to Shut in 8 States" New York Times 28 November 1979 p. A1, D3.

⁵Staff reporter "Goodyear Layoffs" Warren Tribune Chronicle 11 January 1978, p.3.

⁶Staff Reporter "Southern Air to Fire 14% of Workforce" Wall Street Journal 7 August 1978 vol.72, no.25.

⁷Carolyn Perrucci and others, Plant Closings: International Context and Social Costs (New York: DeGruy Inc., 1988).

⁸Strughton Lynd, The Fight Against Shutdowns: Youngstown's Steel Mill Closings (San Pedro: Singlejack Books, 1982).

The story of deindustrialization is a story of corporate flight. It is about the movement of business capital and business resources within the United States or completely out of the country. A shocking example of the depth of this problem is the estimated loss of 15 million jobs in the United States between 1969 and 1976 as a result of plant closings.⁹ This deindustrialization meant the loss of millions of dollars in taxes to communities, lost wages, a lower standard of living for millions of workers and their families, and the reduced production capacity for the United States.

Causes of Deindustrialization

The United States emerged from the Second World War with more than half of all the usable production capacity in the world and as banker to both former enemies and allies.¹⁰ America's domination was made even stronger when the dollar was established as the world's principle currency. In this environment, the American corporations made massive investments abroad in plants and equipment, producing products for various foreign markets, and reimporting products back to the United States. By the 1960's,¹¹ this shift in American capital had

⁹Lawrence Baker, Barry Bluestone, and Bennett Harrison, Corporate Flight: The Causes and Consequences of Economic Dislocation (Washington, D.C.:Progressive Alliance Books, 1981), 12-13.

¹⁰Barry Bluestone and Bennett Harrison, The Deindustrialization of America, p. 112

¹¹Peggy Musgrave, "Direct Investments Abroad and the Multinationals: Effects on U.S. Economy". A paper prepared for the Subcommittee on Multinational Corporations, Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C., August 1975, p. 14.

accelerated to the point where total plant and equipment investment located outside the U.S. doubled in some industries. The widespread production plants and distribution centers of these new multinational corporations had created complete production systems. They had a dramatic impact on both U.S. and worldwide business because it changed the most important concept in economics: competition.

By 1970, nearly three quarters of the total U.S. exports and one half of all imports were transactions between domestic and foreign subsidiaries of the same U.S. and foreign multinational corporations. More and more corporations were producing parts in one country, assembling them in another country, and then returning the final product to this country for final distribution to American consumers. In discussing this type of arrangement, corporation president Harry Henshel of Bulova Watch Company said, "We are able to beat the competition, because we are the competition."¹² By 1978, nearly a third of the profits of the top one hundred U.S. corporations came from operations located in foreign countries.¹³

Changing Technology

One phenomena which permitted rapid growth during the 1950's and 1960's was the dramatic change in available technology. New and expanding technological advances permitted business managers to shift

¹² Quoted in Barnett, Richard and Ronald Muller, Global Reach, (New York: Simon and Schuster 1974) p.305.

¹³ "Decline of U.S. Power", Business Week, 12 March 1979, p. 41.

capital and operate networks of facilities across long distances.¹⁴ Business leaders always desired the ability to make changes quickly at the cheapest cost and this became possible with the new technologies in production, transportation, and communications.

As new technologies were created and improved, it became easier for business managers to take advantage of new sources of cheap labor. The new computer operated machines reduced the need for large numbers of workers and also reduced the skills needed by any one employee.¹⁵ Along with new developments in transportation and communications, it became possible for companies to shift production to new areas, thus deindustrializing some areas while reindustrializing other areas. Companies were no longer bound to their home base but were now free to split off some portions of their production to various locations around the world. Private telecommunications and computer systems kept managers alert to business changes as if the entire company was located under one roof.

Centralized and Concentrated Control

Since the nineteenth century, there has been a dramatic change in the actual structure of American business. An increasing share of the total productive capacity of the economy, including financial assets, physical assets, and labor power, has come under the control of complex,

¹⁴Katherin Marton, Multinationals, Technology and Industrialization (Massachusetts: Lexington Books, 1986).

¹⁵Harry Braverman, Labor and Monopoly Capital, (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1975), ch.4.

hierarchically-structured and private bureaucracies called corporations.¹⁶ Smaller and less competitive enterprises still make up the largest share of American businesses, but these continue to decline each year and seldom display substantial power as a smaller, individual company. Real power has become the domain of large corporate giants which continue to grow larger and command even more power in the international market place.¹⁷

Corporations, because of their size and structure, have several advantages over smaller companies.¹⁸ First, large corporations have the greatest opportunity to control prices and output. Secondly, these companies could, by controlling prices and output, become a monopoly in one or several production areas. Thirdly, because of concentrated power, large corporations may be able to control the pace of technological progress and the related rate of capital expansion. And finally, these corporate giants can more directly control the location and movement of production and capital.

By 1905, mergers produced the first large wave of corporations as America saw the expansion of corporations such as U.S. Steel, International Harvester and General Electric. A driving force behind many of these large industrial giants was the desire to reduce or

¹⁶Richard Eells, Global Corporations: The Emerging System of World Economic Power (New York: Macmillan Publishing, 1976).

¹⁷Edward Herman, Corporate Control, Corporate Power (New York: Cambridge University Press 1981).

¹⁸Barry Bluestone and Bennett Harrison, The Deindustrialization of America, p. 120.

eliminate competition.¹⁹ Mergers and expanding business conglomerates continued through the time of the Second World War and accelerated as cash rich corporations began to acquire companies which controlled distribution or production of products different from the corporation. This process is vital to the discussion of deindustrialization because the company's success and survival was no longer dependent on only one product or one production site.²⁰ Company allegiance, which at one time was centered on the local plant, the workers, and community, gave way to maintaining the international conglomerate.

Tax Laws and Government Regulations

Since the Second World War, public policies promoted and facilitated the centralization and overall concentration of control over private capital.²¹ A primary incentive to business was the tax break which often was promoted as a way to create or maintain jobs for the country. The general outcome of those efforts was the promotion and protection of concentrated economic power both in the United States and other areas of the world.²²

¹⁹John Blair, Economic Concentration (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1972), p. 260.

²⁰Subcommittee on Antitrust and Monopoly, Committee of the Judiciary, U.S. Senate, "Hearings on Economic Concentration", Ninety-First Congress, 1969, p.63.

²¹Kenneth Flamm and Joseph Grunwald, The Global Market: Foreign Assembly in International Trade (Washington: D.C.: Brookings Institute, 1985).

²²Ibid, p. 238-254.

Alan Feld, past consultant to the Federal Trade Commission and professor at Boston University, identified three elements of the tax laws which have affected business growth.²³ The first was the accelerated depreciation allowance which, in effect, granted companies with large tax liabilities interest free loans by reducing taxable income in the earlier years. The second was the investment tax credit which allowed deferral of a portion of the tax indefinitely, so that some large companies reached nearly complete tax forgiveness. And thirdly, there was the depletion allowance which helped companies cover the cost of searching for selected mineral resources, mainly oil. Taken collectively, these tax incentives allowed U.S. companies to greatly reduce their tax bill.²⁴

After multiple mergers, some corporations became conglomerates consisting of hundreds of different companies. The resulting deindustrialization was just the unfortunate side-effect of a corporate decision. Several researchers have concluded that capital disinvestment was the result of corporate planning and that this mechanism was used to maximize profit. The deindustrialization of certain regions or sectors of the economy result was simply not part of the management calculus.²⁵

²³Alan Feld, "Tax Policy and Competition" (Paper prepared for the Bureau of Competition and the Office of Planning and Evaluation, Federal Trade Commission, 1979).

²⁴Pearl Kamer, The U.S. Economy: Adjusting to the New Realities (New York: Praeger Co., 1988).

²⁵Lenora Berson, David Gracie, and John Raines, eds., Community and Capital in Conflict: Plant Closings and Job Loss, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1982).

Labor Relations and Business Climate

The movement of industrial production and capital from the northern regions of the United States to the south and foreign countries had a serious impact on American workers. The search for increased profits by large multinational corporations led to the relocation of production to areas within the U.S. and to foreign countries where the labor costs were seen to be less restrictive on the company. This process was accelerated by the corporation's desire to eliminate high production costs in aging manufacturing sectors such as steel, textiles, rubber, and automobiles. A primary method to achieve this goal was to cut back or eliminate production in high cost manufacturing operations and to move production to low cost, often low-wage, areas of the globe. Consider that in only 7 years (1969 to 1976) 31 million jobs were eliminated in this country due to plant closings.²⁶

The shifting capital of large corporations led to great emphasis on the bottom line. Financial survival of the corporation became more important than a particular company owned by the conglomerate or a particular production plant and its workers. It is worth noting that some large industries such as steel had built up years of cash holdings and these were of value to the growing corporations. Large conglomerate mother companies purchased smaller companies and drained off money from these cash cows to finance other international efforts. This was the

²⁶Richard McKenzie, Fugitive Industry: The Economics and Politics of Deindustrialization (San Francisco: Pacific Institute for Public Policy Research, 1984).

case with Youngstown Sheet and Tube. As the eighth largest producer of steel, it was purchased by the Lykes Corporation in 1969. During the years that followed, Lykes reduced expenditures for the plant operations and equipment and used the steel company's good cash flow to fund other financial ventures.²⁷ In 1977 Lykes closed the Youngstown plant laying off 4,100 steel workers.

Foreign Competition

The dramatic growth of the 1950's and 1960's following the Second World War provided the United States economy with a new level of prosperity. Military and political might strengthened the economic position of the United States during this time. The war time restrictions on consumer goods, shortages in housing, and the unfilled demand for public services set the stage for a long period of growth in America. As the dollar established itself as the world's primary currency, international trade was now wide open for the United States.²⁸ Rebuilding damaged economies abroad and meeting pent-up requests for goods and services at home provided almost unlimited economic growth opportunities for the United States.

It is generally accepted that the hard working Japanese and efficient Germans built economies capable of competing with the United States. What is often overlooked is the degree to which American

²⁷"There's more than Ships and Steel in the Lykes Family Vault", Fortune 17 July 1978, p. 51-56.

²⁸The Industrial North. Future of Jobs, Select proceedings of the IUP conference on Industry in Society, , October 21-23, (Indiana, Pa.: University of Pennsylvania, 1982).

corporations helped them achieve it.²⁹ In an effort to gain positions in foreign markets, American corporations granted licenses to foreign companies for U.S. technology. This gave foreign companies the ability to make immediate improvements in production and distribution without spending time in development. Secondly, U.S. companies worked together with foreign companies in joint production arrangements building plants which would later be turned over to the host country. This gave the foreign host countries well constructed plants and greatly improved their production capacity in a short period of time. And finally, American companies bought stock in foreign companies. This direct investment created a further interdependence between competing global corporations. Taken together, these efforts by U.S. corporations strengthened foreign companies and set the stage for later direct competition by foreign corporations.³⁰

The impact of strengthened foreign competition greatly eroded much of the keystone industries of the United States. Three examples show how between 1950 and 1978 the U.S. lost major world shares of international markets.³¹ First is the petroleum industry; in 1950, U.S. companies were responsible for over half of the world's total crude petroleum production. By 1978 it controlled only 14 percent of that production. Second is the steel industry; during the same period,

²⁹Barry Bluestone and Bennett Harrison, The Deindustrialization of America, p. 142.

³⁰Ibid, 142-143.

³¹Carolyn Perrucci and others, Plant Closings: International Context and Social Costs, p.16-17

American steel production dropped from 46 percent of the world's production to only 18 percent of the world's production. And finally, there is the American automobile industry. In 1950 it produced 82 percent of the world's cars, but by 1978 that total had dropped to around 29 percent.³² Foreign competition had a dramatic negative impact on American industries, especially older manufacturing sectors. Collectively, plant closings produced negative side effects for large sectors of American business and the local communities.³³

Deindustrialization and Northeast Ohio

The manufacturing region of Northeast Ohio is a primary example of an economy impacted by deindustrialization. The Warren - Youngstown area became one of the country's greatest industrial production centers. Known as the Mahoning Valley, the region was well recognized for production of machine parts, electric lamps, transformers, basic and custom steel, automobiles, and other manufactured products.³⁴ Its geographical location with an abundant source of water, a network of railroads and highways, and a skilled labor population formed the foundation for many years of economic stability. As far back as 1803 this region had long been noted for iron and steel production and has been compared to the manufacturing centers of Chicago and

³²Ibid., 17-19.

³³Peter Fisher and Mickey Lauria, Plant Closings in Iowa: Causes, Consequences, and Legislative Options (University of Iowa: Institute of Urban and Regional Research, 1983).

³⁴History of Trumbull and Mahoning Counties (Cleveland: H.Z. Williams and Co., 1882).

Pittsburgh.³⁵

As the United States economy matured and shifted its structure from manufacturing to an economy based on service related jobs, the Mahoning Valley suffered serious economic problems. Manufacturing, especially in the area of basic steel production, was the foundation of the area's economy.³⁶ This reliance on primary manufacturing also became the root of the region's downfall starting in the 1970's.³⁷ Because the area's manufacturing centers were some of the world's first, it meant that a large share of the local plants were out-dated, less competitive and therefore less profitable. Foreign competition, recessions, high interest rates, government regulations, changing energy costs, high production costs, and changing technologies all contributed to the demise of steel and other manufacturing in the area. The elimination of these factory jobs created severe economic problems.

In 1973, overall employment and industrial growth in the manufacturing sector reached peak levels.³⁸ At that time, the total non-agricultural employment was 211,000 with 93,000 workers employed in factories. Manufacturing accounted for 44 percent of the total jobs with

³⁵Trumbull County, Columbus, Ohio: The Ohio Historical Review, 1991, vol.10, no. 46.

³⁶Tom Matthews and Dan Pecchia, "The Demise of Steel," Warren Tribune Chronicle, 13 September, p.A1.

³⁷Ibid, A1, A5.

³⁸Donald Curry, Analysis of Youngstown-Warren Area Labor Market, An unpublished report compiled by the Ohio Bureau of Employment Services, Youngstown, Ohio District, March 1, 1986.

47,000 workers employed by the steel industry. The production of primary metals accounted for 51 percent of all factory jobs and 22 percent of the total employment for the entire Mahoning Valley.³⁹

Looking back to 1965, manufacturing accounted for nearly 48 percent of the area's total employment.⁴⁰ However, the region experienced economic problems beginning in 1974 and this marked the long term decline of the Steel Valley;⁴¹ overall employment stabilized or grew, but manufacturing declined. By the end of the 1974-1975 recession, 12,000 jobs were lost with 7,800 jobs eliminated in the steel industry. The relative share of employment dropped to around 43 percent by 1973 and to about 28 percent in 1985.⁴² That meant that over a twenty year span of time, from 1965 to 1985, the local manufacturing economy saw a 42 percent decline in its relative share of the area's total economy.

The area was once considered one of the world's major supplier of steel.⁴³ However, the loss of thousands of jobs and the closing of several manufacturing plants gave credibility to the term rust-belt.⁴⁴ Many steel mills completely ceased operations and the production

³⁹Ibid., p. 5.

⁴⁰Yih-Wu Liu, Survey of Manufacturers in the Mahoning Valley: 1985, Youngstown State University (March 1986), a report prepared for the Mahoning County Board of Commissioners.

⁴¹Ibid., p.5.

⁴²Ibid., p.1.

⁴³Trumbull County, Columbus, Ohio: The Ohio Historical Review, p. 11-16.

⁴⁴Tom Matthews and Dan Pecchia, "The Demise of Steel," p. A1.

plants were either abandoned or torn down. Between 1973 and 1986, seventy five percent of the steel industry jobs in the Mahoning Valley were lost to plant closings.⁴⁵ For example, in 1977 Lykes Corporation halted many years of production at Youngstown Sheet and Tube and put nearly 5,000 workers out of a job.⁴⁶ As the first in a string of steel mill closings, this event drew national attention to the problems experienced by local communities in the wake of plant closings.⁴⁷ Compounding that problem, in late 1979, both U.S. Steel and Jones and Laughlin Steel announced that they would close plants and lay off nearly 6,000 workers. By 1983 more than 36,000 jobs had been eliminated with 27,000 in manufacturing.

Manufacturing employment in the Warren-Youngstown area dropped from 93,000 in 1973 to 52,700 in 1985. This was a loss of nearly 40,000 factory jobs. More than 43 percent of all the manufacturing jobs which built and sustained the area were gone. The Ohio Bureau of Employment Services indicated that the economic problems of the Mahoning Valley were "the most severe since the Great Depression of the 1930's".⁴⁸ What

⁴⁵Terry Buss and Roger Vaughn, A Development Strategy for the Mahoning Valley, Youngstown, Ohio: Center for Urban Studies, Youngstown State University, 1986.

⁴⁶Strughton Lynd, The Flight Against Shutdowns: Youngstown's Steel Mill Closings, p. 27.

⁴⁷Terry Buss and F. Steven Redburn, Plant Closings: Impacts and Responses, Youngstown, Ohio: Center for Urban Studies, Youngstown State University, September, 1986.

⁴⁸Roberta Steinbacher, testimony before the Congressional Subcommittee On Employment Opportunities, (Ohio Bureau of Employment Services, March 3, 1986).

appeared to be an unending source of financial stability for the region, namely heavy manufacturing, had suddenly become a nightmare of lost financial support.⁴⁹ All through the Mahoning Valley, families, businesses, schools, social agencies, and local governments flirted with serious losses of income and possible bankruptcies because of local deindustrialization.⁵⁰

After previous recessions and economic downturns in production, the area manufacturing plants would recover production. This time it would be different. From the peak level economy of 1973 the Mahoning Valley continued in steady decline. The steel industry alone lost 56 percent of the 1973 employment level. Today, there is no steel made in the Mahoning County and production has changed in other parts of the Valley. It is not difficult to understand the economic and social and political problems the loss of 40,000 jobs would have on the area.

As a result of the ravaging affects of plant shutdowns and worker lay offs, once great industrial growth regions like the Mahoning Valley became areas engulfed in economic depression.⁵¹ According to the Ohio Bureau of Employment Services, the Warren - Youngstown region had, overall, the highest average manufacturing wage rates in the State of

⁴⁹Tom Matthews and Dan Pecchia, "The Demise of Steel,"p. A1.

⁵⁰Hugh O'Neill, Economic Development and Economic Opportunity: Mahoning Valley, Youngstown, Ohio: Center for Urban Studies, Youngstown State University, October, 1986.

⁵¹Larry Ledebur, A Targeted Industry Strategy for the Mahoning Valley, Youngstown, Ohio: Center for Urban Studies, Youngstown State University, April, 1986.

Ohio.⁵² If the 1985 average hourly rate of \$13.22 an hour is used for discussion, it meant that the local factory worker earned nearly \$30,000 a year.⁵³ If this figure is applied to the 40,000 lost manufacturing jobs from 1973 it meant that nearly \$1.2 billion disappeared from the local economies. It is important to note that this is not a one time loss, but rather, it is a yearly loss to the region every year after the plant closings. It does not reflect the millions of dollars lost because of failing support industries after the shutdowns and it does not reflect the taxes lost to city, state and federal governments.⁵⁴

The continued loss of manufacturing jobs led to decline in many sectors of the area economy. Families which were once able to put money in savings, purchase cars, buy a house, and plan for the future were now just trying to survive from day to day. Factory workers often prided themselves as being the image of middle America. Because of plant closings they were suddenly cast aside to an already glutted labor market to fend for themselves.⁵⁵ These workers believed the American dream that hard work and effort would be rewarded by a good paycheck and hope for the future; it was especially difficult for them to accept the fact that their jobs were gone forever.

⁵²Labor Market Review, RS 790, Ohio Bureau Of Employment Services, Columbus, Ohio.

⁵³Donald Curry, Analysis of Youngstown-Warren Area Labor Market, p. 8.

⁵⁴Ibid., 8.

⁵⁵Gene Harbrecht "It was the decade that steel left the area" Warren Tribune Chronicle 24 January 1980.

Funding Education During Deindustrialization:

Warren, Ohio

Deindustrialization had a negative impact on efforts to fund education. A clear example of this situation was the funding problem in Warren, Ohio. Between 1975 and 1989 the region witnessed the elimination of nearly 100 manufacturing and business operations in Warren and the Mahoning Valley.⁵⁶ The Warren community, which had a proud history of consistent economic growth, was faced with major changes to the local society and the school system. These dramatic changes to the economic fiber of the area had a profound and negative effect on the financial decisions and policies of the Warren Schools.

The decline and loss of much of the industrial manufacturing in the Warren area affected the Warren City Schools in several areas. First, deindustrialization caused, especially in the industrial sector, the reduction in the local tax base. This was apparent after commercial and industrial valuation peaked in 1982 and all other property valuations peaked in 1984. After that date, all property valuations continued to decline each year.⁵⁷ Secondly, deindustrialization further reduced the area's population. The general population of Warren and the school population both peaked around 1970.⁵⁸ There was continued decline

⁵⁶Donald Curry, Plant Closings An unpublished listing of plant closings in the Warren-Youngstown region. Compiled by the Ohio Bureau of Employment Services, 1989.

⁵⁷Real Property Valuation Reports, Data supplied by the Trumbull County Auditors Office, Warren, Ohio.

⁵⁸Population Figures for Trumbull County and Warren Ohio, provided by Ohio Bureau of Employment Services, Columbus, Ohio.

since that time as many people left Warren in search of new jobs and a more stable economic area. Thirdly, deindustrialization added to social and community problems which then impacted the school. This was evidenced in the rise in poverty levels, lack of support for school levies, increased unemployment, and concern about the quality of life in Warren. And finally, deindustrialization seriously affected the financial position and the decision making efforts of school leaders. Between 1975 and 1989, financial problems were a constant issue in every aspect of school district operations.⁵⁹ Those problems grew even worse between 1985 and 1989 as the school district moved even deeper into debt.

Devaluation of Property

One of the most critical problems to impact Warren City Schools was the reduction in the value of real property.⁶⁰ It is important to remember that the keystone of school funding in most states, including Ohio, is local tax revenues from levies on property.⁶¹ This meant that as property values dropped, it reduced the local financial support of the school system. As Warren's property value dropped and more manufacturing plants moved out of the city, the greater burden to fund schools locally shifted from taxes on large manufacturing plants to

⁵⁹Colette Jenkins and Jennifer Houtman, "Debt Drama: Schools Face Storm Clouds", Warren Tribune Chronicle, 25 April 1991, p. A1.

⁶⁰Interview with Jack Pierson, Treasurer, Warren City Schools, July 11, 1991; provided statistical data and related information.

⁶¹Walter Garms, James Guthrie, and Lawrence Pierce, School Finance and Education Policy, p.112.

taxes on residential property. Unfortunately, residential property values also declined during the deindustrialization process and this cycle of continued devaluation of property continued through the late 1980's and into the 1990's. Without a growing valuation in property, Warren schools continued to see a loss of tax support.

The rise and fall of property values was critical to the residents of the city of Warren and school leaders. Funding for schools depended on substantial and consistent property tax revenues for their operations. Beginning in 1975, all property classifications saw substantial growth in property values. While economic concerns were beginning to appear on the national scene, local industry had only just begun to feel those pressures. By 1982, however, property valuation in industrial, commercial, and residential property all rose to the highest level. Two years later, in 1984, public utilities and personal tangible property also reached peak levels.⁶² From that point on, all property classification groups in Warren continued to post marked declines each year.

A careful look at property valuation figures reveal just how much loss took place in Warren.⁶³ Industrial property value dropped in 1982. Since 1984 there was a serious reduction in total property value. In five years, the total value of all property dropped by 8 percent. Residential property and farm property dropped by approximately 9

⁶²Interview with Jack Pierson, Treasurer, Warren City Schools, July 11, 1991; provided statistical data and comments about property valuations.

⁶³Ibid.

percent. And worst of all, the industrial and commercial base of the city lost nearly 10 percent of its value. The loss of revenue to the schools was equally as damaging. The reduced property valuation of all property between 1984 and 1985 alone cost the district \$2,042,389 in lost tax revenue.⁶⁴ It was no wonder that the financial problems of the Warren district would become a serious community problem. One of the main reasons for that problem was the loss of property valuation in the wake of deindustrialization.

School officials were not able to clearly estimate the scope of property devaluation and this in turn affected the budget making process.⁶⁵ In 1983, the district received more money from local property taxes than was allocated in the budget. However, between 1983 and 1989 the total property valuation fell each year. At the same time, the school district leaders were not able to anticipate continued devaluations and suffered tax revenue reductions every year. It was important to note that during several years there was a sizable loss of funds. For example, in 1984 the district lost \$748,967, in 1985 it lost \$994,483, and by 1987 there was a staggering \$1,722,812 loss in local property tax dollars. By 1988 and 1989 there was better anticipation of the problem, but the district still lost over \$300,000 each year. Deindustrialization and its resulting impact on property valuation had a

⁶⁴"Warren Loves Its Kids", a levy campaign information sheet, February, 1986. Documentation provided by the Citizen's Committee for Warren Schools.

⁶⁵Interview with Jack Pierson, Treasurer, Warren City Schools, July 11, 1991; provided statistical data and comments about property valuations.

devastating affect on funding the Warren City Schools. More concern was now placed on the relationship between stable property values and school financial health.⁶⁶

Loss of Population

Deindustrialization accelerated the shift in population and led to further outmigration from the area. Reports concluded that there was an undeniable link between the health of manufacturing in the Mahoning Valley and the local population.⁶⁷ Report findings also concluded that the population had declined and would continue to decline in the foreseeable future. Previous projections anticipated a slow decline in the steel industry with some diversification in overall manufacturing and slow, but steady population growth. None of the reports envisioned the near total elimination of steel production in the valley and a collapse of other large industries.⁶⁸

There was a dramatic drop in the population of Warren over the past two decades.⁶⁹ Looking back to the census data from 1930, it was evident that the city enjoyed real population growth until 1970. Each census year between 1930 and 1970 showed substantial population growth.

⁶⁶Anthony Downs, "Falling Schools, Falling Real Estate", Mortgage Banking, September, 1988.

⁶⁷Thomas Finnerty, Housing Supply and Demand: Warren - Youngstown MSA, 1970-2000, Youngstown, Ohio, Center for Urban Studies, February 1990.

⁶⁸Ibid., p.4.

⁶⁹Trends in Employment: Trumbull County, Ohio, Ohio Bureau of Employment Services, Columbus, Ohio, 1991.

The 1980 and 1990 census, however, revealed that large numbers of people left Warren. A report by the Ohio Bureau of Employment Services indicated that 1982 was an important year because of outmigration attributed to declining manufacturing. Years of high unemployment and the collapse of local industries led to low housing demand and outmigration.⁷⁰ Over the period of two decades, Warren lost 20 percent of its population.

During the same time Warren City lost general population, the school system also lost student population. Obviously, deindustrialization did not cause all of this loss. As the baby boom generation moved through the schools during the 1960's there was an understandable rise and later drop in enrollment. However, most of that generation left the schools by the end of the 1960's and early 1970's. It was evident that as industry and job opportunities left the area, so did families with school age children. The general effect of this continued outmigration impacted the schools in two main areas. The first was support of school levies. Many of the parents who might have been the best supporters of tax levies, because their children were in the school system, moved from the area. This meant a weakening of community support of public education. Secondly, the loss of each child cost the school in reduced allocations of state aid.⁷¹ Remember that

⁷⁰Thomas Finnerty, Housing Supply and Demand: Warren - Youngstown MSA, 1970-2000, p. 5.

⁷¹Robert Stabile, Ohio School Finance Handbook, (Westerville, Ohio, Ohio School Boards Association: 1990).

the state provided funding to Warren schools (\$2530 in 1989) for each student enrolled in the district. This meant that when families left the area there was the potential loss of not only levy support, but the immediate loss of state funding. Both situations hampered the financial stability of the schools in Warren after deindustrialization.

Community Problems

Clearly, one of the most serious community problem in the wake of declining industry was unemployment. In large part, deindustrialization was responsible for the job loss of thousands of workers. Nearly 100 manufacturing and business operations shutdown in Warren and the Mahoning Valley between 1970 and 1989.⁷² Industrial manufacturing and primary steel production ceased being the dominant factor in the area's economy. Manufacturing accounted for 44 percent of the total jobs with 47,000 workers employed by the steel industry. By the end of the 1974-1975 recession, 12,000 jobs were lost with 7,800 jobs eliminated in the steel industry.⁷³ The relative share of employment dropped to around 43 percent by 1973 and to only 28 percent in 1985. In just two decades the local manufacturing economy saw a 42 percent decline in its total relative share of the area's economy and the loss of nearly 40,000 jobs.⁷⁴ The area saw a decline from a total

⁷²Donald Curry, Analysis of Youngstown-Warren Area Labor Market, An unpublished report compiled by the Ohio Bureau of Employment Services, Youngstown, Ohio District, March 1, 1986.

⁷³Ibid.

⁷⁴Trends in Employment: Trumbull County, Ohio, Ohio Bureau of Employment Services, Columbus, Ohio, 1991.

of 50,172 manufacturing jobs in 1979 down to only 34,698 in 1989, as thousands of workers permanently left the manufacturing sector.⁷⁵

Because of the loss of industry, there was massive unemployment in Warren and surrounding areas. By 1980, the unemployment rate had risen to over 12 percent. By 1983, the rate of unemployment in Warren was over 20 percent. There was also a relationship between the general unemployment rates and the property valuations impacting the Warren City Schools. In 1982, industrial and residential property valuations peaked at the same time Warren's unemployment rate was at an all time high of 20 percent. While total property valuation continued to increase until 1984 because of built up manufacturing inventories and equipment in storage, unemployment rates remained above 9 percent until 1989.

The impact of this unemployment was seen in several ways. First, it meant that many families had to move from the region to find employment elsewhere in the country. This, in turn, led to decline in student population and reduced tax allocations to Warren schools.⁷⁶ Secondly, the unemployment rate was a direct reflection of the deindustrialization process which stimulated the decline in all categories of property values. Thirdly, unemployment created personal and community fears about the future. And finally, the unemployment rate led to decreased spending in the community. This led to a ripple effecting the economy which effected other parts of the city, including

⁷⁵Ibid.

⁷⁶Robert Stabile, Ohio School Finance Handbook, (Westerville, Ohio, Ohio School Boards Association: 1990).

the school system. Collectively, the plant closings and high unemployment had very negative effects on the Warren schools and its financial stability.

Warren also experienced several social problems such as the reduction of economic growth, depressed real estate values, reduction of public services, and an increased incidence of poverty similar to other non-growth metropolitan areas.⁷⁷ The once boom town economy of steel and other heavy manufacturing was the very source of financial problems for the area. As deindustrialization impacted the region, the Warren and Trumbull County area saw a 51% increase in poverty and a loss of 14,553 in total population. A report to the Congressional Subcommittee on Employment in 1986 revealed that the area had suffered many years of severe economic and social problems.⁷⁸ According to the Council for Economic Opportunities of Greater Cleveland, the poverty figures did not come as a surprise to many of those who study community changes. Warren, and other surrounding areas suffered drastic economic losses in the 1970's and 1980's⁷⁹ and these were directly related to the increased levels of unemployment. Deindustrialization did not create the problem

⁷⁷Edgar Rust, "Development Without Growth: Lessons From the U.S. Metropolitan Experience", Proceeding of the Conference on Alternative Futures for Older Metropolitan Regions, Center for Urban Studies, Youngstown State University, May 6, 1977.

⁷⁸Roberta Steinbacher, testimony before the Congressional Subcommittee On Employment Opportunities, (Ohio Bureau of Employment Services, March 3, 1986).

⁷⁹Phone interview with George Zeller, Research Department of the Greater Cleveland Council for Economic Development, Cleveland, Ohio, June 25, 1991.

of poverty in Warren but it certainly did accelerate the increasing rate in the wake of plant closings.⁸⁰ For the Warren Schools, the increased level of poverty was a negative force impacting district finances. One of the main problems centered around the effect it had on school levies. People with limited financial resources naturally wanted to protect their money. This meant that school officials often had a difficult time persuading voters, many of them laid off from closed plants, to pass school levies when the school system faced monetary problems. The tax burden shifted from the industrial sector to home owners during deindustrialization. The other poverty related issue was the increased cost of education for children of poverty, many of which had special education needs.⁸¹ Consider that since 1981 the percentage of families receiving Aid to Dependent Children (public assistance) increased by 84 percent while, at the same time, the state average was only 38 percent. During the same period the state had a 70 percent increase in the average family income, but Warren's increase was only 40 percent.⁸² Simply stated, students of poverty often cost the district more money. Unfortunately, Warren City Schools had less and less money to educate these and other students.

⁸⁰Susanna Brandon, "Schools Caught in Chokehold", Warren Tribune Chronicle, 22 April 1991, p.A1.

⁸¹Colette Jenkins, "Mills Closure Added to School's Burden", Warren Tribune Chronicle, 23 April 1991, p.A2.

⁸²Ibid, A2.

Loss Of Operating Revenue

As deindustrialization impacted the Warren area it also impacted the Warren Schools. Property valuation took a dramatic dive after 1984 and continued on a downward path throughout all of the 1980's.⁸³ This meant that local tax revenues were also reduced each year. The school system lost thousands of students as families left Warren in search of better jobs after plant closings.⁸⁴ And finally, the cost of education continued to increase due to negotiated contracts, legal mandates, price increases for products, and general inflation. At the same time, the operating revenues of the school remained static or declined.

The Warren City School System was spending more money than it was receiving from various revenue sources. The most critical loss, obviously, was from taxes on local property which was declining in value. A look at the operating revenues and operating expenses from 1981 to 1989 showed the level of the problem. In 1984, there was already a deficit condition as the operating expenses totaled \$26,334,026 but the total revenues totaled \$21,549,952. This meant that only 87 percent of the financial needs required to run the school were being met by regular revenue sources. After property valuations peaked in 1984 this situation grew worse. By 1987, only 65 percent of the operating expenses were met by regular revenue sources. In order to maintain school operations,

⁸³Marty Douce, "Reduction in Tax Duplicate to hurt Warren Schools", Warren Tribune Chronicle, 18 November, 1987, p.A1.

⁸⁴Attendance records supplied by the Office of Pupil Personnel Services, Warren City Schools.

district officials expanded on a practice that was in operation as far back as 1975: borrowing money. While property valuations rose, the practice of borrowing money did not pose an overwhelming threat to the financial stability of the district.⁸⁵ However, after huge losses from declining industry dropped property values, the practice of borrowing led the Warren district into many years of compounding debt. Because of a reduced tax base and lowered tax effort locally, the state of Ohio did increase its share of the funding under the state's funding formula. However, the debt and level of borrowing continued to increase in an effort to maintain the educational level of the district.

Deindustrialization, in and of itself, did not cause the debt crisis in the Warren City Schools. However, deindustrialization did contribute to the unemployment rate, the poverty level, and the property devaluation which then impacted the stability of the schools. From 1981 to 1989, the Warren City Schools borrowed money in an effort to maintain the school system.⁸⁶ Some of the borrowing was against anticipated tax revenues which were not yet received because of slow tax collections in the county. However, a pattern of borrowing was established and did lead to additional borrowing because of revenue shortages. Between 1981 and 1989, the Warren City Schools borrowed nearly \$56 million.

⁸⁵Interview with Jack Pierson, Treasurer, Warren City Schools, July 11, 1991.

⁸⁶Interview with Floyd Frederick, past Treasurer, Warren City Schools, July 8, 1991.

Conclusions

The issues of school funding and deindustrialization are closely tied to the growth and decline of American manufacturing. This is most evident in the areas of heavy industrial production such as steel, automobiles, and machine parts. National and international economic changes over the past 40 years affected the very existence of industrial based communities such as Warren, Ohio. Until the late 1960's, the area enjoyed strong economic growth, but by 1975 there were layoffs at large plants, the complete shutdown of some manufacturing operations, the relocation of some companies to the south, and bankruptcies. The results of these actions included decreasing land value, a reduced tax base, loss of population, rising unemployment, and increased poverty.

Deindustrialization, as noted in the study of the Warren City Schools had a profound and negative effect on school funding. First, deindustrialization caused, especially in the industrial sector, the reduction in the local tax base. Secondly, deindustrialization further reduced the area's population which, in turn, resulted in lowered financial support for the schools. Thirdly, deindustrialization added to social and community problems which then impacted the school. This was evidenced in the rise in poverty levels, lack of support for school levies, increased unemployment, and concern about the quality of life. And finally, deindustrialization seriously affected the financial position and the decision making efforts of school leaders. In the wake of increasing debt, reduced population, increased poverty, and declining tax base, financial problems became a constant issue in every aspect of school operations.

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